LITHUANIA PREPARES FOR COUP PLOTTERS' TRIAL

VILNIUS, Aug 02, BNS - The trial of three former Lithuanian Communists accused of conspiring to overthrow the government in January 1991 will begin no earlier than the latter part of 1995, the chief prosecutor for organized crime and corruption, Kestutis Betingis, told BNS Wednesday.

While two of the defendants, Juozas Jermalavicius and Ivan Kucherov, have already completed the reading of the 315 volumes which comprise the case, the third defendant, Mykolas Burokevicius, former leader of the pro-Moscow Lithuanian Communist Party, has about 115 volumes left to read.

Under Lithuanian law, a person cannot be tried until the defendant is fully acquainted with the case against him or her.

The three have not changed their "revolutionary convictions" and are quite optimistic about their future, the prosecutor said, but added that they face "very severe punishment." Betingis refused to speculate whether prosecutor in the trial would ask for death penalty.

NEW FERRY LINE LINKS LITHUANIA, DENMARK AND SWEDEN

VILNIUS, Aug 03, BNS - A new ferry line linking Lithuania, Denmark and Sweden was opened on Thursday by the Danish ship operators DFDS Baltic Line A/S, officials and the Lithuanian weekly Verslo Zinios said.

The ferry Dana Baltica will sail on the new Copenhagen-Malmo-Klaipeda route. It will be replaced on its earlier line between the Danish port of Fredericia and the Lithuanian port of Klaipeda by the ferry Dana Minerva, which can carry up to 20 trailers more than Dana Baltica.

Freight shipments should increase by 60 percent after the new line is opened, said Sergei Terekhin, director of the Klaipeda-based firm Euro-Baltic Ltd. which represents the Danish company in Lithuania.

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